



Summary Minutes

**Board Meeting
November 18, 2021**

Call to order

The meeting was called to order at 2:37 p.m. by Board Chair Kent Keel in a Virtual Meeting via telephone and video conference.

Roll call of members

Chair	Vice Chairs
(P) Kent Keel, City of University Place Councilmember	(A) Dow Constantine, King County Executive (P) Paul Roberts, Everett Councilmember

Board members	
(P) Nancy Backus, City of Auburn Mayor	(P) Ed Prince, City of Renton Councilmember
(P) David Baker, City of Kenmore Mayor	(P) Kim Roscoe, City of Fife Mayor
(P) Claudia Balducci, King County Council Chair	(P) Nicola Smith, Lynnwood Mayor
(A) Bruce Dammeier, Pierce County Executive	(A) Dave Somers, Snohomish County Executive
(A) Jenny Durkan, Seattle Mayor	(P) Dave Upthegrove, King County Councilmember
(A) Debora Juarez, Seattle Councilmember	(P) Peter von Reichbauer, King County Councilmember
(P) Joe McDermott, King County Council Vice Chair	(P) Kristina Walker, City of Tacoma Councilmember
(A) Roger Millar, WSDOT Secretary	
(P) Julie Meredith, WSDOT Secretary Alternate	

Katie Flores, Board Administrator, announced that a quorum of the Board was present at roll call.

Report of the Chair

Meeting Agenda – Chair Keel stressed the importance of timeliness at the meeting due to a long agenda which includes a presentation on selecting the preferred alternative for the Operations and Maintenance Facility South.

CEO Selection Committee – Chair Keel reported that the first meeting of the CEO Selection Committee will take place on November 29.

CEO Report

CEO Peter Rogoff provided the report.

Federal Update

On Monday, President Biden signed the \$1.2T bipartisan Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act into law. The bill includes the whole of the Surface Transportation Reauthorization Act of 2021, including the Capital Investments Grants Program. Over the next 5 years, if Congress fully appropriates the authorized amount, CIG funding will double over current levels thanks to \$8B in direct appropriations over the next five years and a 30% increase in the CIG authorization levels. Overall, the Surface Transportation Reauthorization Act of 2021 would authorize increases for transit by 75% over the previous five years.

As for the Build Back Better Act, the House is expected to consider the bill as early as today with the House intending to stay in session until it votes on the legislation. The Congressional Budget Office anticipates that it will publish a complete cost estimate for the package by the end of the day tomorrow.

The Build Back Better Act would provide \$1.75 trillion in overall funding, including \$10 billion for the Affordable Housing Access Program to be developed jointly by the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) and Department of Housing and Urban Development to provide access to affordable housing, improve mobility for low-income riders and enhance access to jobs and educational opportunities and community services. Mr. Rogoff advised he would continue to update the Board on the progress of the package.

State Update

Governor Inslee appointed Senate Transportation Committee chairman Steve Hobbs to replace former Secretary of State Wyman, who recently resigned to accept a position within the Biden administration. The Senate Democratic Caucus will select the new Transportation Committee chair, possibly in the next few weeks. Meanwhile, Hobbs' appointment creates a vacancy in the Senate 44th Legislative District. Snohomish County will make that appointment, which could also happen in the next few weeks.

Finally, later in November, the House and Senate are holding their annual legislative assembly days to conduct pre-session meetings and workshops. There will be several briefings and work sessions on topics of interest to Sound Transit, including discussions on impacts of the federal infrastructure package on Washington State and the future of vehicle license fees.

Veterans Day & Native American Heritage Month

November is National Veterans and Military Families Month and Native American Heritage Month. To honor our veterans, Sound Transit raised the POW/MIA Flag at Union Station on Nov. 1. To continue honoring Veterans, on November 30, in collaboration with Sound Transit's Native American & Indigenous Employee Resource Network (ERN), Sound Transit's Veteran ERN member Patrick Johnson is facilitating a discussion on the Washington State Historical Society's presentation of "Veteran's Day: Stories from Native American Veterans."

Also, as part of the agency's recognition of Native American Heritage Month, Sound Transit's Native American & Indigenous ERN collaborated Women Empowering Sound Transit to co-host a movie screening of the award-winning documentary "Without a Whisper," which spotlights the untold story of how indigenous women influenced the early suffragist movement.

External Engagement

The external engagement report was distributed for Boardmember review earlier in the day.

South Bellevue Park-and-Ride Opening and Trains Moving on East Link

Light rail vehicles have begun riding the tracks in Bellevue, marking the first phase of systems integration. This is an exciting milestone for East Link, as crews begin evaluating controls, safety and signal systems, and communications. The work is happening overnight between Bellevue Downtown Station and Redmond Technology Station.

Another East Link milestone: The 1,500-stall park-and-ride garage at the future South Bellevue light rail station opened this week for Sound Transit Express and King County Metro bus passengers. Sound Transit celebrated the opening Monday at a media event with Boardmember Balducci, Deputy CEO Kimberly Farley, Bellevue Deputy Mayor Jared Niewenhuis, and partners from WSDOT and King County Metro. This is an important step in our system expansion, and great news for Eastside bus riders. The new facility is accessible by trail, and has racks and cages to safely store up to 35 bikes.

Communities of Focus RFP Out

An RFP was issued last week to procure consulting services to explore how Sound Transit can best support our riders and community members who are living without housing, homes or shelter, or people who are in crisis. The main outcome of this work is to ensure the transit system is physically and psychologically safe for all people. Sound Transit is looking to update procedures that guide interactions with this community to ensure they are consistently approached with intentionality and compassion in a consistent, safe and secure way. This is a big step to ensure that Sound Transit is playing a significant role in developing solutions for and support for all riders and community members throughout the region.

Fares Related Policies

The Board has several fares-related policy issues to consider in the coming months, and Mr. Rogoff presented a preview of the work ahead.

The discussion of fare policy is broad and complex, and the agency's work in this arena has been further complicated by the drop in ridership, and corresponding fare box recovery, due to the pandemic. As the Board considers fare-related policies over the next year, staff are grounding this work in the agency's Fares Vision "to serve passengers with a fare structure that is regionally integrated to encourage transit ridership through equitable and simple pricing, and financial stewardship."

This policy work is needed to ensure the agency's ongoing financial health and ability to deliver and operate service. Currently, our fare evasion rates have gone from 3% in 2019 to early data pointing to an 11% evasion rate in 2021. Coupled with our Non Fare Boarding rate increasing from averaging 11% in 2019 to currently sitting about 33% in 2021, Sound Transit is significantly under performing in Board adopted fare box recovery goals, thus creating a gap in needed revenue for the system.

For context, the stated Board policy of 40% Link fare box recovery needed to continue current levels of service was at 34% in 2019 and this year is trending below 10% (currently actual number is 7% through Sept). All modes are in a similar pattern, with ST Express policy rate set at 20% and currently under 10% and the Sounder rate set at 23% and currently trending under 5%.

This, combined with current ridership trends, is projected to produce \$30 million in lost revenue in 2021 with \$11 million of that coming from non-fare boardings and the other \$19 million coming from underperforming ridership. It is important to engage the Board in a discussion about the agency's overall fares program and how these revenue related pieces fit together with the other work being conducting on compliance and the pilot program.

Staff has been contemplating a Board workshop in early 2022 to have a comprehensive discussion that will inform our overall fares vision and the timing and scope of this will be presented when possible.

Some of the topics that the workshop would cover in detail and will require the Board's direction:

- Revisiting Board fare box recovery policies for each mode, policies that the Board last established in 2010 (almost 12 years ago)
- Considering flat fares versus distance based fares for Link light rail, and if and when to increase fares
- Establishing a fare structure and set fare box recovery rates for Tacoma Link and for the newest mode, STRIDE bus rapid transit
- Consider extending Sound Transit's participation in the Annual Subsidized Fare program, which would end early next year, and
- Exploring other low-income fare options.

Welcome to Andy Izquierdo

Andy Izquierdo, Chief Communications Officers started working at Sound Transit this month. The Board has been briefed on his strong qualifications and deep background before, including his success in his previous role as Vice President and Chief Communications Officer at Waste Management Inc. Mr.

Izquierdo has hit the ground running, taking up the mantle of highlighting Sound Transit's mission to the public, and staff is excited to have him on board.

Public Comment

Chair Keel announced that the Board was accepting public comment via email and verbally through the virtual meeting platform.

The following people provided written public comment to the Board:

Joyce Hengesbach

Edna Shim

The following people provided verbal public comment to the Board:

Joyce Hengesbach

Edna Shim

Brad Thorsun

Brian Nash

Consent Agenda

Voucher Certification: October, 2021

Minutes of the October 28, 2021 Board Meeting

Motion No. M2021-65: (1) Approving key business terms of a transaction for transit-oriented development at the OMF East, and (2) delegating to the chief executive officer the authority to execute and subsequently amend as necessary transaction agreements with the development entities to develop the OMF East TOD project, subject to the Board-approved key business terms.

Motion No. M2021-69: Authorizing the chief executive officer to execute an agreement with University of Washington for construction of a Bus Rapid Transit Station at the University of Washington Bothell campus in the amount of \$1,022,000, with a 10 percent contingency of \$102,200, for a total authorized agreement amount not to exceed \$1,124,200.

It was moved by Boardmember Backus, seconded by Chair Keel and approved by the unanimous consent of the 11 Boardmembers present to approve the Consent Agenda as presented.

Business items

Resolution No. R2021-19: Adopting the 2022 Service Plan, and authorizing the chief executive officer to implement recommended service changes in 2022.

It was moved by Boardmember Baker and seconded by Vice Chair Roberts that Resolution No. R2021-19 be approved as presented.

Boardmember Baker advised that the Rider Experience and Operations Committee forwarded the resolution with a do-pass recommendation at its October meeting. He called on Alexander Lew, Senior Transportation Planner, and Michael Couvrette, Service Planning Manager, to provide a staff report on the action. Mr. Lew reviewed the approach to restoring service in 2022. The approach rethought service to reflect new all-day travel patterns, prioritize equity and add more service, consider rider and community input, adjust service based on ridership and operating conditions, and thinking ahead to changes arriving with future system expansion.

Link service was proposed to maintain current service levels, Sounder South would be restored to full 13 roundtrips per day and Sounder North would remain at two roundtrips per day. The Tacoma Link Hilltop Extension was proposed to open with increased frequency of 10 minute weekdays, Saturday, and 20 minutes on Sunday headways.

ST Express service focus was on achieving parity across the region. Increases in Tacoma and Federal Way service to every 15 minutes all day would do so, and cater to changing service demand. Mr. Lew reviewed service maps representing these changes.

Mr. Lew reviewed the outreach strategy and ridership monitoring. He noted that trends were consistent with an all-day service strategy. Demand was more consistent throughout the day and more riders were riding outside of traditional peak hours than in the past. Staff would continue to monitor trends closely.

Mr. Couvrette reviewed the impact of the pandemic on ridership, and outlined an emerging staffing shortage, noting that ST Express operated by Pierce Transit instituted a 10 percent decrease in trips effective November 7 to account for the shortage. This shortage and change in service directly impacts rider's quality of service due to trip delays and crowding and will delay the implementation of further service improvements.

He advised that a flexible approach was being taken for the 2022 service plan. Staff would continue to monitor ridership and operator availability and return to the Board in 2022 to update and possibly update the service plan as needed.

Chair Keel asked how staff would work to improve reliability over the year in light of the operator shortage. Mr. Couvrette explained that a planned and well communicated service reduction was vital to ensure riders understood the new service.

Chair Keel called for a roll call vote.

Ayes

Nancy Backus
David Baker
Claudia Balducci
Joe McDermott
Ed Prince
Paul Roberts

Nays

Kim Roscoe
Nicola Smith
Dave Uptegrove
Kristina Walker
Kent Keel

It was carried by the vote of 11 Boardmembers present that Resolution No. R2021-19 be approved as presented.

Motion No. M2021-68: Authorizing the chief executive officer to execute an agreement with the City of Shoreline for Sound Transit to contribute funding for right of way acquisition and construction of the NE 145th Street/I-5 Interchange Project, which would construct a westbound transit priority meter for buses of an amount not to exceed \$10,000,000.

It was moved by Boardmember Balducci and seconded by Boardmember Roscoe that Motion No. M2021-68 be approved as presented.

Boardmember Balducci advised that the System Expansion Committee forwarded the motion with a do-pass recommendation at its November meeting. She advised that Shoreline would manage the project with oversight by WSDOT. The agreement included provisions to ensure Sound Transit's interests were protected upon completion of construction and during operations.

Boardmember Roscoe asked if it was clear who would maintain the signal. Paul Cornish, Program Director for Bus Rapid Transit, advised that the signal would be maintained by the Washington State Department of Transportation.

Chair Keel called for a roll call vote.

Ayes

Nancy Backus
David Baker
Claudia Balducci
Joe McDermott
Ed Prince
Paul Roberts

Nays

Kim Roscoe
Nicola Smith
Dave Upthegrove
Kristina Walker
Kent Keel

It was carried by the vote of 11 Boardmembers present that Motion No. M2021-68 be approved as presented.

Resolution No. R2021-20: (1) Authorizing a 1.0 percent statutory increase in the property tax levy for 2022, (2) certifying the total property tax levy amount inclusive of levy increases per RCW 84.55.010, and (3) authorizing the preparation of the levy certification forms.

Ryan Fisher, Deputy Executive Director of Financial Planning Analysis and Budget, and Stephanie Ball, Deputy Executive Director for Financial Planning, provided the staff presentation. Mr. Fisher began by presenting that revenues are projected to be lower than expenditures for 2022, and the shortfall would be made up by drawing additional debt.

The voter approved plan assumes a one percent annual property tax increase, and any levy increase of less than one percent will lower revenue projections in the financial plan. Failure to pass any property tax resolution would result in an over 50 million dollar shortfall in the financial plan through 2046. Ms. Ball outlined the proposed levy, and how the rate of valuation was established in the Sound Transit 3 ballot measure.

Boardmembers Constantine and Durkan joined the meeting at this time.

Chair Keel advised that he would not be supporting the resolution out of protest.

It was moved by Boardmember Backus and seconded by Boardmember Roberts that Resolution No. R2021-20 be approved as presented. Chair Keel called for a roll call vote.

Ayes

Nancy Backus
David Baker
Claudia Balducci
Down Constantine
Jenny Durkan
Joe McDermott
Ed Prince

Nays

Kent Keel

It was carried by the majority vote of 14 Boardmembers present that Resolution No. R2021-20 be approved as presented, with Boardmember Keel voting in the minority.

Motion No. M2021-70: Updating committee members for 2021.

Chair Keel advised that the action would appoint Boardmember Kristina Walker to the Rider Experience and Operations Committee and Boardmember Backus to the Executive Committee.

It was moved by Boardmember Baker and seconded by Boardmember Roscoe that Motion No. M2021-70 be approved as presented. Chair Keel called for a roll call vote.

Ayes

Nays

Nancy Backus	Paul Roberts
David Baker	Kim Roscoe
Claudia Balducci	Nicola Smith
Down Constantine	Dave Upthegrove
Jenny Durkan	Pete von Reichbauer
Joe McDermott	Kristina Walker
Ed Prince	Kent Keel

It was carried by unanimous vote of the 14 Boardmembers present that Motion No. M2021-70 be approved as presented.

Reports to the Board

Operations and Maintenance Facility – South Preferred Alternative

Chelsea Levy, South Corridor Development Director, and Curvie Hawkins, OMF-South and Tacoma Dome Link Extension Project Director, continued the presentation. Ms. Levy reported that this presentation would summarize OMF South Draft EIS findings, as well as key themes from public comments, and would present the findings of the Title VI Facility Equity Analysis.

Ms. Levy began by reviewing the three alternative sites being considered for placement of the Operations and Maintenance Facility South (OMFS) which are the Midway Landfill in Kent, South 336th Street in Federal Way, and South 344th Street in Federal Way. The Midway Landfill site provides unique challenges due to ground settlement, and there are multiple mitigation options which include the construction of a platform to support OMFS buildings, a concrete slab/beam system to support OMFS facilities, or excavation of contaminated soil and replacement with imported soil. The two locations in Federal Way would require advanced completion of some of the Tacoma Link Extension guideway in advance of that project's construction timeline due to geographical location for access.

The project delivery timeline for the OMFS is quite narrow, and only the project alternatives located in Federal Way would support the timeline for opening the project in time to maintain the project delivery timelines for the Federal Way and Tacoma Link Extensions.

Mr. Hawkins then presented various site characteristics for Boardmember consideration, including business and residential displacements, estimated employee displacements, and environmental factors such as wetland, forest, and stream impacts. Conceptual cost estimates for each site, and the various mitigation strategies for the Midway Landfill location, were also presented.

Public involvement was then summarized including 270 plus public communications, 2,400 plus participants in the online open house, 120 plus attendees at two separate public meetings and hearings, over 9,000 mailers within the project corridor, and over 7,000 recipients of project emails. Mr. Hawkins presented the organizations, agencies, jurisdictions, and tribes that provided comment, and noted that these comments can be made available to the Board upon request.

The comments had themes including preference for the Midway Landfill location due to minimal displacements, cost concerns over the Midway Landfill site, concerns over impacts to local streams and waterways, concerns over traffic impacts, and concerns regarding relocation of the businesses at the S. 344th Street alternative location. Mr. Hawkins then presented the Facility Equity Analysis which concluded that there were no disparate impacts for any of the site alternatives.

Boardmember Balducci reminded the Board that the full Board and committees had many briefings, some Boardmembers visited the site. She advised that she would bring a recommendation for the Board at the next System Expansion Committee meeting. She invited all Boardmembers to join the committee for discussion. She noted that none of the sites were far and above the others, and that it would be difficult decision but one that needed to be made.

Boardmember Roscoe echoed Boardmember Balducci's comments. She advised that when she became a Boardmember, she accepted a tour with the Garagetown establishment and saw portions of the S 344th Street site. She additionally took a tour the previous day with staff to see the Midway Landfill site and she felt very prepared to move forward in the decision.

Implementing Triunity Recommendations and Board Realignment

Kimberly Farley, Deputy Chief Executive Officer, began the presentation. She reminded the Board that the Portfolio Services Office was introduced at the previous meeting and introduced Moises Gutierrez, Executive Director of the Portfolio Services Office (PSO).

Mr. Gutierrez advised that this presentation would outline the status of implementing Resolution No. R2021-05. He continued that staff and the department is committed to maintaining accountability and transparency to the Board as the process moves forward. Mr. Gutierrez then introduced Claire Khouri, Deputy Executive Director, PSO. Ms. Khouri explained that implementation of the realignment plan was organized into three separate elements which are Board oversight, financial capacity, and performance reporting.

Ms. Khouri outlined the objectives of each of these elements which were enhancing the Board's ability to address issues before they grow, seeking ways to reduce the affordability gap, and enhancing transparency and accountability to support the Board's advancement of affordable projects. Ms. Khouri and Mr. Gutierrez then continued to update the Board on various actions being taken to further the program elements, and which were planned and in progress. The next update to the Board on this work will be provided in first quarter of 2022.

Fare Engagement Update

Russ Arnold, Chief Passenger Experience and Innovation Officer, began the presentation and introduced Carrie Avila-Mooney, Director of Regional Government and Community Relations, and Sandee Ditt, Manager for Fare Engagement. Mr. Arnold outlined the presentation and noted that updates would continue into 2022.

Ms. Avila-Mooney reviewed the community engagement process. In 2019 staff received over 1000 onboard surveys and 8000 online surveys, conducted 5 listening sessions, and completed a community report out. In 2020 300 Sounding Board surveys were received, and conducted ongoing engagement with important stakeholders who were part of the process from the beginning. In 2021 13 listening sessions with organizations serving communities of color were conducted. The organizations were compensated for their time and expertise, and a Community Driven Engagement Plan was drafted. Implementation of the plan had begun and a survey was launched.

Themes in the results from the community engagement efforts included advancing racial equity, building trust within communities, honoring people's time with compensation, and a desire to provide follow-up and review after the collection of feedback. Continuing work will include further engagement, and staff has partnered with the Urban League of Seattle-King County to further this work. Feedback from further surveys and engagement will be brought to the Board in January of 2022.

Ms. Ditt then presented the training program for current fare ambassadors, and how feedback has been incorporated into the fare ambassador pilot program. She also outlined the compliance rates being found, which dipped in August but has returned to a baseline of approximately 90 percent in October.

The second cohort of fare ambassadors is currently being onboarded and will allow the program capacity to increase in the coming months.

Boardmember McDermott advised that he was encouraged by the report. He especially appreciated hearing about the engagement with the community based organizations. He asked what the Board could expect at its January meeting. Mr. Arnold advised that in January, the Board would receive a full report on the community engagement efforts and begin a discussion on the updated policy for possible action in February.

Chair Keel asked that organizations outside of King County be engaged. Ms. Avila Mooney advised that staff engaged with groups across the region and outside of King County.

Other business

None.

Next meeting

Chair Keel explained that the next meeting time and date had not yet been decided, but would take place in mid December. He advised the Board and public to watch for more information from Sound Transit about how to view the meeting.

Adjourn

The meeting adjourned at 4:53 p.m.

ATTEST:



Paul Roberts
Board Vice Chair



Kathryn Flores
Board Administrator

APPROVED on 12/16/2021. AM.